

look upon this as a basis upon which this whole superstructure is to rest. A false step here will, in my judgment, lead to bad results. I think that if we put this salary at such a rate that we cannot command the best talents of the State, we inflict a very serious blow upon the entire system. I have been surprised, I must confess, at the course which this debate has taken. I did not suppose that there would be any objection to the salary proposed here. But as it appears that there is a serious objection, and that that sentiment pervades the house generally, I would now suggest, as a compromise between the sum of three thousand dollars which the committee has named, and the sum of two thousand dollars which the gentleman from Caroline (Mr. Todd) has named—I would now suggest the sum of two thousand five hundred dollars. And I therefore submit that amendment.

Mr. TODD. I will accept that amendment, or rather I will withdraw my amendment, so that the question will be taken upon the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore county (Mr. Ridgely.)

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. I confess that I would have preferred that the salary as reported by the committee should have remained, at least until the system was organized, rather than it should be fixed at any less sum. According to my estimate of the qualifications which are required in our State to organize a public school system, a system of free public school education, there are fewer men fitted for that place than for almost any other position which we shall create or continue under the constitution which we shall frame. We must have a person familiar with the State, and with the various school systems which prevail in different parts of the State. It is well known that we have a large number of dissimilar systems in the various counties of the State. Prince George's county has one system; Cecil county has another; Baltimore county another; indeed almost every county in the State has some system, or apology for a system, some kind of school system sustained in some sort of way, upon which they have relied for the education of the children of those counties.

In order to give efficiency and force, these systems must be harmonized; there must be deduced from the mass one harmonious system which shall operate correctly and well throughout the State. In order to do this we must have a person familiar with the subject of education, familiar with the systems prevalent elsewhere, with those that prevail here; of sufficiently capacious views to cover the whole field; of sufficient aptness in details and in working out the minor points of the plan to make an efficient system. And very few men are fitted for that. It is not often that such a man can be found. Men have been referred to here. Horace Mann has been named, who was the architect of the school system as

it now exists in the State of Massachusetts.—He was a man who at that time occupied the very highest social position; he occupied a most prominent political position, being president of the State senate at the time. Yet he laid aside his political position and all his political prospects, and for years devoted his entire energies to digesting and perfecting a plan of public education. He visited Europe, if I remember aright, more than once for the purpose of studying the systems in existence there.

And a man was employed in the State of Connecticut, Mr. Barnard, who for many years published a work upon the subject, which has become almost a classic in the common schools of our country. So important were his services found, that he was imported into the State of Rhode Island and given a salary of more than four times the salary of their governor there, and considerably larger than that of the chief justice of the State, until he had arranged and put into operation there a system of school education.

Mr. MILLER. It was not three thousand dollars.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. I do not remember what it was. I have treated it comparatively with other salaries. I have made this reference to show what is my estimate of the sort of services and ability we require.

Gentlemen have referred to the fact that there were plenty of persons applying for the position last winter, when a system was partially framed. I suppose there would be plenty of applicants if the salary was placed at five hundred dollars. And perhaps if the position was put up at auction, we might find some who would be willing to take it at a great deal less sum than that. But a saving of one, or three, or five hundred dollars, in the matter of a system of free public school education, is a saving in the wrong direction. We may save the money and beggar the intellect of the State as far as the masses are concerned.

I believe, therefore, that it is to the interest of the people of the State everywhere, that it is true economy, to pay such salaries to its officers, as to secure for the places the best men that it is possible to obtain. I therefore should have voted for the section as reported by the committee, with perfect readiness to adopt something like the suggestion of the gentleman from Talbot (Mr. Valliant.) And I should be glad to see some such arrangement made at this time.

Mr. DAVIS, of Washington. I move to make the salary of this State superintendent three thousand dollars.

The question was announced to be upon the motion of Mr. RIDGELY, fixing the salary at two thousand five hundred dollars.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. The chair has decided that the question shall first be taken upon the largest sum. The committee propose the